

REMARKS

The Examiner has rejected all of the claims under 35 USC 112, stating that they are indefinite and fail to distinctly point out the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1-9 have been cancelled and new claims have been submitted, but it is urged that the Examiner's objections as to the format is not well-founded in that there is no requirement that every element known to be an element of a defined subject need be recited, but only the inventive subject matter needs to be positively specified. Further, there is no prohibition from expressing the results of the inventive subject matter.

The Examiner has further rejected the claims under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rohrbough. Rohrbough teaches a chord zither with a tubular frame, permanently secured front and back panels including internal structure within the sound box (38,38a) which must be secured to either the top and or the bottom panel, thereby making them impossible to remove, and further, Rohrbough has interchangeable chord bars which are housed in a fixed mechanism further preventing any interchange of the front panel. Rohrbough makes no provision nor is there any discussion of utilizing doubled strength to allow doubled strings thus allowing a chromatically-tuned instrument to sound like a diatonically-tuned instrument.

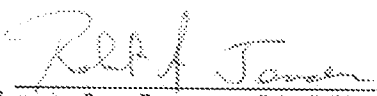
The present invention specifically deals with a chorded zither including all of its elements wherein the peripheral frame is non-organic and specifically designed to support doubled strings to increase the depth of the melody portion of the piece, yielding the flexibility of available chords with chromatic-tuning as well as the fullness of sound of a diatonic instrument, while also allowing the user of the instrument to replace front and/or back panels for reasons of appearance, to tailor the acoustical performance to differing types of musical sound and presentation, and/or for reasons of increasing the size of the sound box and the deeper sound resulting therefrom. In addition the present invention deals with a readily removable and replaceable chord assembly allowing the player to interchange these elements very quickly, thus greatly increasing the versatility of the

instrument (provides more finger room to play the strings because of smaller chord groups and allows the musician to lock down the chord groups at different positions for either mid-string play or just above to bridge [harder tonal quality]). These elements are set forth in the claims as currently presented, and are not anticipated by the reference to Rohrbough. Further, there is no teaching to make these improvements obvious.

It is believed that the application is in condition for allowance and notice thereof is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions, it is urged that she telephone the undersigned.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 07-1900.

Respectfully submitted,
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